

EXETER-WEST GREENWICH January 25, 2011

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

MINUTES

The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District School Committee held a meeting on this date at 6:00 p.m. in the Exeter-West Greenwich Jr. – Sr. High School Library. Members present were Gregory Coutcher, Chairperson; Teri Maia-Cicero, Vice Chairperson (arrived at 6:17 p.m.); Valerie Zuercher, Clerk; Mark Rafanelli; Theresa Donovan, Paul McFadden, and Claudine Pande. Superintendent Thomas J. Geismar, Director of Administration Robert V. Ross (arrived at 6:10 p.m.), Director of Special Services Carmella Farrar, and Student Member Matthew French (left the meeting at 6:30 p.m.) were present.

ORDER – Chair Coutcher called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all and Member Rafanelli read the District Mission Statement.

Open Forum – None

Recognitions/Achievements – Hera Gallery Art Competition – Young Adults' Exhibition – Dr. Geismar advised that the two art student recognition items will be postponed to the next regular meeting agenda.

Scholastic Art and Writing Awards of 2011 – Item postponed

Donna Lico – National Board Certified – Superintendent Geismar recognized and congratulated Donna Lico on achieving National Board Certification (NBC).

Dr. Geismar stated that there are approximately 90,000 NBC teachers across the country. The district is fortunate to have several of those teachers on its faculty. Achieving NBC is a complex process, which requires substantial commitment and time. Ms. Lico has been teaching for twenty-years and does an outstanding job as science teacher at the junior high school. On behalf of the School Committee, Chair Coutcher offered congratulations and presented Ms. Lico with a School Committee Apple Recognition Award.

Presentation – Rachel’s Challenge – Dr. Geismar introduced Catherine Murray, Guidance Counselor; Mary Roda; Executive Director of the Domestic Violence Resource Center (DVRC), and Megan Whelan, Education Advocate for the DVRC to present a brief overview about a program called Rachel’s Challenge. Dr. Geismar said that this program fits in with the mission of the district’s anti-bullying taskforce. Ms. Murray, Ms. Roda, and Ms. Whelan reported that DVRC, with grant funds donated by the Friendship Fund, would offer Rachel’s Challenge to EWG students and the community on February 3. Rachel Scott was the first person killed at Columbine High School in 1999. Her acts of kindness and

compassion together with the contents of her diaries became the basis by which her family started this program.

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Robert Ross arrived at this time, (6:10 p.m.).

The daytime program will include two school wide assemblies for students in grades 7 – 9 and grades 10 – 12 that challenges and motivates students to create a positive change in the way they treat others. Following the assemblies, a student leadership workshop and training session will take place. To finish, a community presentation is planned for that evening from 6:30 to 7:30 pm to which all parents and community members are invited.

Teri Cicero arrived at this time, (6:17 pm).

In response to Member Rafanelli's concern about the potential affecting impact on students, Mrs. Murray stated that guidance counselors and faculty members will consider that day a "crisis day" and will give students a preview in advance to prepare for this tremendously moving presentation. Ms. Roda stated that DVRC staff members would be available to support students. She assured the School Committee that the individuals running the program are trained in this area.

Student Member Report – Student Member Matthew French reported that the Winter Ball is on schedule and tickets are selling well. He said that this event is a good fundraiser for the senior class.

Mr. Gorham arrived at this time 6:19 p.m.

ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA- Superintendent Geismar gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.

Member Rafanelli made a motion to accept the consent agenda. Member McFadden seconded the motion. Voted 7 – 0 in favor.

The following items were approved:

A. Approval of Minutes - Regular Minutes of December 7, 2010; Regular Meeting Minutes of January 4, 2011; Executive Session Minutes of January 4, 2011; Special Meeting Minutes of January 11, 2011; Budget Workshop Minutes of January 11, 2011; Budget Workshop Minutes of January 18, 2011

B. Personnel Items

1. Appointments – (As Recommended by the Superintendent)

a. David Lewis as FFA Advisor, Annual Stipend \$1,871.66 effective immediately, contingent upon receipt of a non-disqualifying National Criminal Background Check

b. Perry Miller as 1.0 FTE One – on –One Special Education Teacher Assistant for the remainder of the 2010/11 school year, Salary \$15,673 effective on or about January 26, 2011

2. Leaves of Absence

3. Resignations

4. Grievances

5. Non-Renewals

6. Recalls

7. Sabbaticals

C. Bills – In the amount of \$310,554.35

D. Home School Approvals

1. REDSHIRT - Wakinyan

2. FARRARO - Nicholas

End Consent Agenda

Correspondence – None

New Business – State Legislators Night – To follow-up on the brief discussion that took place at the last budget workshop, members agreed to bring ideas that are important to the fiscal health of the district to the next regular meeting for discussion. On behalf of the School Committee, Dr. Geismar will send letters to invite Senator

Frank Maher and Representatives Costa, Tomasso, Valencia, and Watson to the March 8 meeting to discuss financial issues and pertinent legislation that could impact the district.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Charter Amendments/All-Day Referendum – Chair Coutcher stated that this item is back on tonight’s agenda to clarify with Attorney Brad Gorham if the language approved at the last regular meeting could be set as procedure in School Committee policy rather than as a change to the charter.

Student Member Matthew French left the meeting at this time, (6:25 p.m.).

Attorney Gorham verified that it is legally acceptable to set School Committee policy to implement the process for balloting at an all-day referendum on the proposed budget. He provided copies of a draft of a policy he wrote for School Committee consideration. The committee came to a consensus that the draft policy would first go to the policy subcommittee for analysis/revision and then brought to the School Committee for the routine readings/adoption process. Vice Chair Cicero stated that the policy subcommittee would need to meet as soon as possible in order to have the policy ready for a first reading at the next regular School Committee meeting.

Attorney Gorham left the meeting at this time, (6:33 p.m.).

Chair Coutcher asked if the School Committee is interested in reconvening the Charter Review Committee to brainstorm additional ideas for School Committee consideration. He suggested that perhaps that committee could also revisit the proposal surrounding the composition of the School Committee. Member McFadden recommended waiting until there is feedback from April's all-day referendum. Member Donovan and Clerk Zuercher agreed with reactivating the committee. Member Rafanelli, Chairperson of the Charter Review Committee, stated that he would reach out to those members to see if they are still interested in serving. The meeting(s) are advertised and open to anyone in attendance to bring ideas. Member McFadden suggested recomposing the committee in order to bring new ideas to the mix. Consensus of the committee was that it is not necessary to reorganize the Charter Review Committee.

Establish Healthy and Safe Schools Committee – Vice Chair Cicero stated that she and Clerk Zuercher had requested this agenda item. However, there still has not been an opportunity to bring Principal Smith to a meeting for comment on the status of EWG's Anti-Bullying Taskforce that she manages. It might be possible to merge the Anti-Bullying Task Force committee with the proposed Healthy and Safe Schools committee. Clerk Zuercher requested to postpone this

item once more to the next meeting agenda. Vice Chair Cicero proposed that she and Clerk Zuercher could meet with Principal Smith if the committee agrees. She assured members that she and Clerk Zuercher are in dialogue with Principal Butler and Superintendent Geismar regarding this matter. Superintendent Geismar verified that he appointed Principal Smith as the Anti-Bullying Task Force point person. This item will continue to the next regular meeting agenda.

Capital Project Update – Dr. Geismar reported on Metcalf's water system project. He stated that the RI Department of Health engineers approved the plans for the work on the oil pipes. Administration is still working with the architect and contractor regarding the additional charges to the project. Architect Luis Torrado is working on offsetting the credits and negotiating the charges. Mr. Ross gave a brief description of the latest change to the design plans.

Budget Update/Discussion – Dr. Geismar told members that Attorney Vincent Ragosta should arrive shortly to partake in tonight's Executive Session discussion regarding the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). Next, Dr. Geismar reported that he recently met with building principals and the Directors of Administration and Special Services to prioritize sufficiencies for next year's budget. One key objective when prioritizing was to try to work with what already exists before asking for additions. Dr. Geismar advised that since student enrollment is in flux, the following priority list is fluid.

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- **.5 FTE Reading Coordinator and Instructional Equipment**
- **All-Day Kindergarten (if the committee decides to move forward)**
- **Early Childhood Outreach Coordinator**
- **ALP at the Junior High Transition Program (Administrative team is looking at the high school ALP to serve junior high students and become a grades 7 – 12 program)**
- **Late Buses and Hall Monitor (to support the ramp up program and other afterschool activities)**

Dr. Geismar stated that the request for computers is on hold while Mr. Ross works with the administrative team on the district's lease situation. Mr. Ross stated that it looks positive that the district may be able to accomplish computers for the K – 6 Reading Program and the junior high school computer lab with what is already in the budget and without an increase.

Attorney Ragosta arrived at this time, (7:09 p.m.).

Dr. Geismar said he would bring the Reading Coordinator job description to the next regular meeting for approval. Lastly, Dr. Geismar stated that Principal Almonte is working with her staff on next year's schedule to support tier three PLP students without requiring additional staffing. If that effort fails, a request for staffing would become a priority, as the district is required to provide services to those students.

Reports/Comments – None

Important Dates and Meetings – Tuesday, January 11, 2011-Budget Workshop; Tuesday, January 18, 2011-Budget Workshop; Tuesday, January 25, 2011-School Committee Meeting; Tuesday, February 8, 2011-School Committee Meeting; Thursday, February 10, 2011-Joint Meeting; Tuesday, February 22, 2011-School Committee Meeting; Monday, Tuesday, March 1, 2011-Joint Meeting; Wednesday, March 2, 2011-Budget Workshop; Tuesday, March 8, 2011-School Committee Meeting (Budget Adoption); Friday, March 18, 2011-Deadline for Motions to Change the Budget by More than \$10,000; Monday, March 21, 2011-Public Hearing; Tuesday, March 22, 2011-School Committee Meeting; Tuesday, April 12, 2011-School Committee Meeting; Monday, April 11, 2011-All Day Referendum

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EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 – Vice Chair Cicero moved to go into Executive Session at 7:18 p.m. in accordance with 42-46-5 (2) – CBA – (C-94/TA)-Negotiation Discussion and/or Pending Litigation; seconded by Clerk Zuercher; and voted as follows:

Gregory Coutcher Yes

Teri Cicero Yes

Valerie Zuercher Yes

Mark Rafanelli Yes

Theresa Donovan Yes

Paul McFadden Yes

Claudine Pande Yes

Meeting recessed to Executive Session at 7:25 p.m.

Clerk Zuercher moved to reconvene to Open Session. Vice Chair Cicero seconded the motion. Voted 7 – 0 in favor.

Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 9:30 p.m.

During Executive Session, the following votes took place:

MOTION made by Clerk Zuercher to appoint Chair Coutcher and Member Pande and Member McFadden to the negotiating committee; seconded by Member Rafanelli; and voted unanimously in the affirmative.

MOTION made by Member McFadden for the negotiating team to request monetary concessions from NEA to be completed by 2/25/11; seconded by Member Rafanelli; and voted unanimously in the affirmative.

Adjournment – Clerk Zuercher moved to adjourn at 9:30 p.m. Vice Chair Cicero seconded the motion. Voted 7 – 0 in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

ROBIN CERIO

CLERK